

FAST FACTS:

A LETTER WRITER'S GUIDE

As a leader in the business community, it is very important to share your opinions and views with those who represent us in government at all levels – federal, state, and local. Concurrently, elected officials want to hear from their constituents. They rely on your expertise and input when deliberating on the issues that confront them. We hope that this Chamber resource will provide information and guidance to make it easy for you to communicate with your government officials.

DO:

1. Write on your personal or business letterhead and sign your name over your typed signature at the end of your message.
2. Be sure your exact return address is on the letter, not just the envelope.
3. Limit your letter to ONE subject. Identify the issue clearly; by name and bill number when possible.
4. State your reason for writing clearly – your own personal experience is best.
5. Explain how the issue would affect you.
6. Be reasonable in your request for action.
7. Ask your legislator to state his or her position on the issue– as a constituent you are entitled to know.
8. Thank your legislator when appropriate.

DON'T:

1. Ask for the impossible or threaten your legislator.
2. Use stereotypical phrases and sentences that might give the appearance of being “form letters.”
3. Forget the timing aspect of your letter. Try to send your views while an issue is still relevant and your legislator can take action on it.
4. Try to address every issue that comes up or become a constant “pen-pal.” Quality rather than quantity is the key!

ADDRESSES:

In addressing a letter, always use “The Honorable (Full Name)” for all elected officials regardless of the level of government.

CLOSINGS:

Sincerely Yours, Very Truly Yours, or Respectfully Yours

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Congressman Rodney Davis (R-13)
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Washington DC, 20515
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Congressman John Shimkus (R-15)
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